1: Herskovits & Herskovits E-5 (1928-1929) 1934
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DEATH AT GANKWE

And so once more we were in Sedefo's canoe running the rapids, and once more we pulled up at the landing place. [764]

It was quiet enough there, and no one passing would have noticed anything out of the ordinary in the behavior of the one or two women washing clothes at the riverside, or of the children playing about in the water. Again we climbed the path to the village, this time to the delighted shrieks of the children, whose cries brought others, until we were surrounded by a fearless, clamoring group, shouting, calling after us, "Bak'a, Ame'ica' Bak'a!" Sedefo took us to his house, where we met the senior of his two wives, and turned us over to a young man, who had played one of the drums in the ceremony of the evening before, to show us the village. This was the routine of courtesy due any visitor. Nothing more tangible than a slight reserve marked the tension which made this village different from what it would have been on any midafternoon. [596] [595] [594]

In front of the house of mourning all was quiet. Three elderly men sat on their low stools, talking in low tones. They greeted us as we passed but neither engaged us in conversation nor offered us a seat. Inside the house the small fire still smoldered, and, where the hammock had been, now crouched, soundlessly, an old woman who, we later learned, was the dead man's maternal aunt. We were struck with the number of houses that had symbols of spiritual protection over their doors—*obias*, they are called—magically treated to keep the spirits of death from harming the occupants. As we passed one doorway, a woman holding a baby hastily threw a covering over its head, but not before we saw that it had special markings of sacred white clay on its face. The child was under treatment for some illness, and the mother, in these days when spiritual danger stalked about, could take no chances of the Bakra's magic obstructing the cure. [598] [755]

On the other side of the village, farthest away from the house of death, life flowed on yet more evenly. But as we looked about, our guide stiffened, and soon we too caught the sound of the drums which rapidly became louder. He

1:Herskovits & Herskovits E-5 (1928-1929) 1934
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through them, would have meant courting the displeasure of the spirit which animated the troubled stretch, and would have been dangerous. He was a Man Nengere and knew all this well, for was he not ready to marry Dida any time now? He would have to wait as yet, but perhaps during the next planting her breasts would come, and then in a month, two, three, she would be ready to marry. He was, in fact, in the mood even to cast about for a second wife, though his marrying her would have to wait many years. All that would come, for what with the money he already had earned, and the sums he would get for the wood he might bring down the river later, and this money the Bakra would give him, he would have enough to pay for the hammock, the cloth pangi, the handkerchiefs, the bracelets and beads, and whatever else a man needed to give to his woman and her mother for a fine marriage.

Going through this stretch of still water, which Bayo always found dull, he thought of this and that, for there was no work for his muscles but the monotony of the dip and stroke of the paddle. Going upstream it was different. There the challenge of the slipping pole-stick against submerged slime-covered rocks made a man prove himself. It spoke to the warrior blood in him, which found no outlet in these quiet times. But this was only idling, and his mind found pleasure in wandering, especially if it happened, as now, to be dark enough to make it worthless for him to look about for the things that grew and stirred in the bush.

Yes, it would be almost three hours before the sun was high, and when it stood there—he indicated the place in the heavens to himself with his eye—he might be loading the Bakra's boats to go up river, for word had come from top-side that the Mamadam would be safe in a few days, and now if the Granman meant for the Bakra to get to the upper river, he would be sending word down almost any time. And he, Bayo, was ready for the journey. Here in the blue canister, which he had bought in the city on the Queen's last birthday with part of the money he had

1: Herskovits & Herskovits E-5 (1928-1929) 1934
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got for the timber he and his great-grandfather had floated down the river, he had two fine cloths. One was older and was intended for visiting the villages on the way, and the new one was for the Granman's village. For this occasion, too, he was saving a pair of newly woven garters, though he would wear the two strands of small coral and yellow beads in some of the villages on the way. At Lamé, for instance.

Ai-yo! He would see to it that he looked well at Lamé, for Lamé had handsome women, and at Lamé the women knew how to love. His own powerful love obia had come from Lamé, and there it was in his canister and there beside it was a potent fighting obia which his uncle, who was surpassed by few on the river in the strength of his obia spirits, had made for him. Some day, when Bayo was older, he, too, would know all these secrets, for his uncle had given him some of his gods, and at dances he already showed that he had a strong spirit. Until that time came, he had the obia from Lamé to win for him the love of his fellow men, and should it not avail against the magic of some surly fellow who wished him ill, then he had the other which would serve him in trouble. And on his upper arm was his Kromanti obia—the magically potent iron band—which, by tightening, would warn him when trouble was impending. That was the way to go through life—a man asked the gods to help him meet whatever might come, the good spirits with good, and the bad with yet greater evil.

Up above, whirling past him in the pale dawn, the parrots flew, making a screeching chorus in the stillness, and rousing him to the murmur of the next rapids which he was approaching.

What was that? A boat. Going downstream, he was soon alongside it.

"*Tio*, greetings," he called to the man, speaking in the subdued ceremonial voice.

"Thank you, tio," answered the older man, for he addressed a stranger.

1: Herskovits & Herskovits E-5 (1928-1929) 1934
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Chapter VI

THE PROVISION GROUND

I

THE chameleon says: "Haste is all right, but caution is also a good thing." 538

Bibifo spoke this proverb when we "went aside" with our men to see whether we would accept Chief Fandya's hospitality for that night and the next, that we might see a dance in his village. The rapids above the Mamadam had been difficult, and beyond Baikutu were more rapids. A rest was welcome to Bibifo, and especially a rest at the village of Fandya, where the Granman himself stopped when on his way down the river. 574

"A man is well here with Fandya," Kasanya said. Though he was not of the same clan as the chief of Baikutu, Fandya's clan was an ally of the Granman, and Fandya himself a man of consequence on the river, not alone in its political life, but, what was more to Kasanya's taste, in matters relating to magic. "For the sake of good broth, you eat the sour dumplings," he said to us, indicating his acquiescence, yet hinting that the men would look for pay for the time they would be forced to remain idle in the village, if we stayed. [538]

But the Gankwe men were for going on. Farther up the river were friendly villages from which several of them had drawn their wives, and farther still their own clan village. Asikanu, speaking for them, said, "Waiting for tomorrow is what caused the toad to remain without a tail. It is still early. The next village is not too far away." [538]

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574 609 In his own house, Fandya continued to urge our staying. "Ame'ika Fandya," he said—the year before he had given his own name to the white man—"remain with us tonight and tomorrow. I am an old man. I would like to know that you saw a dance in my village. When you go to the Neng'e country, I would like you to say that Captain Fandya knew how to treat a stranger who came as a friend. Last year when you were here you said you would come with your wife. You have come. Your wife has come. Last year you came, and since then all has gone well in our village. Today there are not many people about. The women are [462] away in the fields harvesting the rice; the men are in the bush hauling lumber. But tomorrow night the women will come in from the planting grounds, because the day after they may not work in the fields, and tomorrow, too, the men will come. Stay and see our dances."

And the bassia, the man second in command, said, [789] "Meti, last year I took an obia against the evil eye from my own door and gave it to you, to hang over yours, that enemies entering your house might not bring in with them bad magic. All has gone well with you. Stay. The gods have shown they favor our friendship."

1

361 The will of the Gankwe men had, however, prevailed, and we reached the village of Pa'aba that day in good time. It was one of the largest on the river. In front of the azang 501 which guarded the road new boats lay on their sides, and farther up the path were others in the making, some black inside with charring, others huge hollowed-out logs, like gigantic drums, waiting for the hand that would set their pulses beating. These boats were as large as any we had seen on the river, as large as the boat Sedefo had rejected because it rolled and he had to think of his kunu.

[556] Kasanya said, "This is a prosperous village. They make the best boats on the river here."

And Bayo said, "Ai, this village has strong men."

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But Bayo's pleasant story came to an abrupt end. Down toward the bank came Sedefo and his companion, motioning the men to join him. They all gathered in front of the guard of palm fronds, and began to discuss something in low voices, while from the village came the staccato rhythms to the Sky God and to the Kromanti spirits in tones at first soft, but swelling and quickening as they continued.

Sedefo came up to us at last and said, "I will tell you something, but you must not think the people of Pa'aba are unfriendly. I will tell you this. Let us go on and make camp farther up the river. There is a provision ground not too far away. We will make it in time."

In the boat Bayo told us that many were possessed in the village, and since here at Pa'aba they danced Kromanti strong, the men did not think it safe to bring us to the village. The year before Kasanya had spent a trying night here. Two or three of the men had found guns and had gone tearing about the village, so that not alone had the women shut themselves up in their huts, as they often did at Kromanti dances, but the men, too, had had to go in hiding.

"That is why we are going on. But I have a strong Kromanti spirit myself. I will go back to Pa'aba tonight and watch the men dance," he said with a laugh.

3

It was already quite dark when we made the planting ground. Up a narrow footpath we followed Kasanya.

"*Koni, koni*—Take care, don't trip at night," he kept calling to us. "*Mbwogu*—Hurry," he urged, though we needed no urging to keep close behind him in this narrow dark shaft which cut the greater darkness of the bush in two.

Bibifo would sleep in our boat to watch the provisions, Kasanya explained as he led the way, for the clearing was so far from shore that it was not wise to leave the boats unwatched.

"It is far," he said. "Grounds are cleared that way—not too near a village, not too near the shore."

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609 In the doorway of one of the huts, a woman squatted over a fire, and at her feet a child sat busying itself with pushing the firewood toward the center. Our cook had planted two forked sticks in the ground, and on them had hung our lanterns, so that we could see the woman silhouetted against the fire and the naked child on the ground singing the seketi which Bayo had sung for us so many [533] times on the river. Over and over the child tried the air, her mother humming it for her softly, while from the doorway of another house a man sat watching them. We had not noticed him until the lanterns had come. The planting [291] ground at harvest time is not a place a man frequents. He was a strange figure there on his low stool, as he sat wrapped to his neck in a large striped cloth. He made not the slightest move, uttered not a single word. But for his cough, he might have been a corpse propped up in the doorway. We stood hesitating whether to cross the short distance between us and the fire to greet the woman and the man, but before we could come close enough to them to speak, we heard Bayo calling us in a voice we had never heard him use in a strange village.

"Bak'a, Bak'a. Come. They want you inside." When we were out of earshot of the woman at the fire, he said in a whisper, "Do not go over to those houses. Tomorrow when we are away from here, I will tell you why. It is for that I called you."

We had no need, however, to puzzle over Bayo's warning. [164] Our cook, who had heard the conversation of the men, told us that the man in the doorway was a leper.

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262 "You know how it happens, Massa? Among us townspeople it is this way. A child inherits a *trefu* from his father. It is one thing, or many things, he must not eat. If he eats what he should not, then he sickens. We know a person who has eaten his trefu by the spots that come out on his skin. If a man goes on eating the things which are his trefu, then the spots become worse and worse. He becomes a leper. So that's how it is."

He did not at once answer the questions we put to him.

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798 799 The other white man was the Catholic missionary who for years had been living in the Gran Rio. He was a friend of the Saramacca people, and they liked him. Now this white man wanted to see Dahomey. He said that he, too, had a strong God who protected him. He asked so many times that they at last promised to take him there. But when he got to Pempeh he fell asleep, and he slept till . . . till they reached the Granman's country. So his life was saved. The gods, knowing that he was a friend of the Saramacca people, did not want to kill him. They put him to sleep until Dahomey was well out of reach.

"And this is what happened to you, Bak'a. The gods did not want to hurt you, so you did not see."

2

133 Past these rapids and another stretch of rough water, and then before us lay the highest falls of the Saramacca. To the right, over a ledge of rock spreading in an unbroken sweep across its entire width poured the Gran Rio, the [361] river up which lay the villages of the Loango clan, and beyond, the untrodden jungle which barricaded the way to the country of the Indians, and the basin of the Amazon. To the left was the final bit of fast water that remained between us and the village where the Granman awaited us. We were at last in the Pikien Rio.

Here the stream narrowed, and we could see on both banks the people who were waiting to see us pass. The • [574] gay colors of the women's cloths were brilliant against the background of green, and their hallooing reached our ears above the rush of the water. A canoe with several young men came alongside.

"We are here to help you with your boats. We have been sent by the Granman. Fire three shots to let him know you are in the Pikien Rio."

576 [201] We fired, and instantly there was an answering salute of three guns. With the reinforcement of paddlers, it did not take long to reach the island which separated us from the landing place of Asindopo Lantiwe. Here all strangers

AT THE COURT OF THE GRANMAN

Both of These men Carried
long wands of office, of black wood topped with silver knobs. About their necks were heavy silver chains, and from each chain was suspended a large silver crescent.

Another man stood near them to one side. He wore a long coat of white edged with scarlet and blue. He carried no stick, and wore no insignia. On his head, over a white kerchief wound tightly about the head and caught up in the back, was a white sun helmet. Above his head, held by one of the younger men who accompanied him, was an umbrella, the highest emblem of rank. It betokened that this man was Moana Yankuso, Granman of the Saramacca people.

3

Kasanya was first out of the boat when the dugouts were brought to shore, and after him came Bibifo. Sedefo and Asikanu remained with the younger men, waiting for the Granman to indicate that he wished to receive them. Only men of rank and elderly members of his own clan would go at this time to speak to the headman, who stood there watching the boats.

"We came, G'aman," we heard Kasanya say, "and we brought the Bak'a." Two or three low-voiced sentences followed, and then the conversation was terminated by the elderly functionary in the yellow coat, who came down to our boat.

"I greet you in the name of the G'aman, Bak'a," he announced. "The G'aman himself awaits you. Come with me."

As we stepped out of the boat, the hallooing of the women and the shouts of the children, which had stopped when the paddlers addressed the Granman, began once again, and, as an underlying voice, the salutes from the shotgun were to be heard. The old man, shifting his wand of office to his left hand, now carefully helped first the one, then the other out of the boat and, offering his arm to each in turn, led us to the top of the steep rise, until we were face to face with the Granman. It would have been unlucky had we lost our footing at this moment of welcome. This chieftain was

1:Herskovits & Herskovits E-5 (1928-1929) 1934
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there not only to tender the courtesy due the guests of the tribal head, but to see that no such mishap occurred to them.

When we had both gained the ascent, he turned to the Granman.

"Headman Yankuso, the Bak'a is before you."

As though just become aware of us, Yankuso fixed us with his eyes, fastening his glance on each in turn.

"Odi, white man. White woman, odi!"

A great figure of a man he was, as he stood there. Tall and massive of build, he towered over those who surrounded him. Barefooted like the rest, there was that in his bearing which was the way of a man who was accustomed to obedience, whose word was final. He was pure Negro. His skin was dark. In his features there was no hint that the lineage of this ruler held any of the blood of the white masters, nor that his ancestors numbered among them Indians who had given way before his invading forbears. His face was impassive, yet underneath the outward immobility was an alertness which the glistening, oil-anointed skin made the more alive. His speech was measured, his words articulated with studied emphasis, which gave to each of them the value of a completed image.

"*Bari*—Cry out!" he called to the women in his vibrant voice. "Halloo, give the welcome of the bush to the people who came."

Amid the renewed cries which his command brought, we turned from the river bank and walked slowly up the path toward the village, past the silk-cotton tree, past the shrine to the ancestors, until we reached an open place on which fronted half a dozen thatched buildings.

"This is my house, white man," he said, pointing to it. "I will put you near me. I will put you in the council house."

4

The council house at Asindopo Lantiwe—the village of Asin, the seat of government—was unlike any we had seen.

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Outside the doorway we heard a decisive clearing of the throat, louder than the coughs we had already learned to associate with the approach of a visitor. After a short pause, the Granman's bulk filled the low entrance, and with him came the elder in the yellow coat, followed by Sungi of Dahomey, the chief who had come to pilot us to the village of the Granman, and the bassia from S'ei.

The men stood with ceremonially inclined bodies until the Granman was settled in his chair, then each in turn took a bench from the shelf above the door, and still with body bent found a place for it against the wall facing the Granman.

After a silence, the Granman spoke.

"The unloading is done. I have set aside five houses for the Bak'a. Mati—friends—the white G'aman told me about this visit when I was in the white man's city. Others have told me. People who come to me must be cared for. The white people are come. They sit among you. The Bak'a and his woman will put up their hammocks here. Here they will stay. The white man's goods are stored in the house in back of mine. The white man has much goods. There is a man from the city who helps them. He will sleep where these goods are stored. So I speak. That is my wish."

"Ya-hai, G'aman," came the assent from And'u.

"Kelele," said the chief in the yellow coat.

"The house in back of this I have had the women get ready also for the white man and his woman. When the chiefs gather for councils, and they want to be alone, the whites must have a place to go aside. I have given a house for the cook, and an open house for the cooking. So it is. People who come to me must be cared for."

"True, true!"

"So it is."

"Kodo!"

"White man," said the Granman, for the first time turning to us, "you have heard?"

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574 For a few moments there was a rapid interchange between him and the old man in the yellow coat.

"The down-river men who have brought the white man," the Granman continued his cadenced speech, "will be housed in the village. The four Gankwe men will put up their hammocks in one house. The other four will be put up in my quarter. So it is. So I care. . . . "

"Yes, wise man."

"Gbolo!"

622 554 The ceremonial introductions followed, and each chief was praised for his special services to the Granman. The man in the yellow coat was of the Oyo people, a son of a great line, held high in the esteem of men and gods. Sungi was a man who knew much of the white man's wisdom. He had been to the French shore, and knew the French tongue, he knew about white man's medicine, but, friends, he was a child of the bush! And'u was a beloved chief, an honest man, a man to send on missions of trust. The bassia was a clever man, one of the men of And'u's village. The gods loved him, for what his hands touched turned to wealth. He was a good man. He was a friend.

A low cough was heard outside. Slowly the cloth was raised, and crouching into the hut came Kasanya and [291] Bibifo. They were carefully dressed, and each wore a kerchief drawn tightly about his head. These they wore by right of age.

622 506 514 The bassia, lowest in rank, was greeted first, and then each chief in his turn, until the Granman was reached.

"Greetings, G'aman."

"Thank you, friends," came the vibrant answer.

This began the colloquy of inquiry about each other's well-being, which here at court had a longer ritual than anywhere on the river. It was a prelude of measured song which introduced all speech between strangers. Bibifo began timidly and did not show himself equal to the many variations which Kasanya had introduced with ease.

"Friends, I am glad you came. You must tell me what is happening in your villages."

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Now it was the Granman's turn to supply the interpolations, while Kasanya and Bibifo reported.

"Yes, so it is. So I know it to be myself. So I have heard," he spoke when they paused.

But when the ceremonial greetings were over, and the conversation turned to down-river affairs, the Granman leaned forward in his chair and talked with the men informally. They were all clan members, or men belonging to clans whose allegiance to the Granman's rule was undoubted, and they talked over many things in the way men do when they meet with their own kind.

The room was growing darker. Yankuso called through the slatted wall against which he was leaning, and the young man who had fired the guns entered.

"Bassia, it is getting late. We must leave this house to the white man. These men with me are my friends. They must drink before they leave."

The bassia took the decanter from the table, and from the shelf underneath it, where we could dimly see shells and containers of shot, he took several small glasses. Before taking the glass to his lips, each man poured some of the liquor on the ground as a libation to the Earth Mother, and, as each drank, he turned to Yankuso and asked if he might leave.

"*Mi da permissi*—I grant you permission," he said to each.

When we had finished our meal, it was already dark. At the door of his own house, Granman Yankuso was sitting on a low stool.

"I have something for you," he said, disappearing inside his house. When he came out, he held in his hand some black object, which we were unable to identify. "You have fire?" he asked, as he suspended this object from a tree which grew between his house and the one in which we were staying.

"There was a white Hollander here who brought this to me. He went from here farther into the bush. He never came out. Light is a good thing at night. When visitors

1:Herskovits & Herskovits E-5 (1928-1929) 1934
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354 974 come, I bring the lamp out. This is a big fire. In the village of my father, across the river, they can see it."

The blazing light made the night seem darker.

"Bak'a," the Granman went on. "For many days you and your woman have been on the river. You are tired. Tomorrow, when you have slept, you will be refreshed. Tomorrow my chiefs will be here. You will tell us why you have come, what you want to do."

He turned toward his house.

"Du mundu, Bak'a," he said. "Let all sleep well."

1:Herskovits & Herskovits E-5 (1928-1929) 1934
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194 the Granman punctuated the pauses of the men, though not often their meaning.

623 But whatever the reports of the women, and the commands given by the Granman, the word for white man interspersed all of the morning's recitals, and the questions of the Granman and the answers often came fast.

Of the men, the Granman asked little. They came up in pairs usually, and now one, now the other took up the report. Clan names were spoken, and occasionally a village name was mentioned, but on the morning preceding the council of the chiefs, only one village was discussed, and one clan. The name of the village was the forbidden one where we had stopped for the night against the Granman's orders, and the clan was that of one group of our paddlers.

2

574 Early on the morning after our arrival at Asindopo Lantiwe, our paddlers came to see us in the council house. The Granman was busy outside his own house with the chiefs who had gathered for the council meeting, and these men who, like ourselves, were strangers here, came as comrades of an adventurous journey to visit with us and talk over the impressiveness of our reception and the allure of the women of the Granman's village, who were famous everywhere on the river. It was a village where chastity [831] among the girls was closely watched, and where its women [582] were given in marriage to the most influential men on the river.

302 291 The men were gotten up splendidly. Their bodies glistened with oil, their cloths were made of the long strips, pieced together by their women, and of patterns which the sun's rays had had no chance to pale. Sedefo's was particularly fine, we thought, but he assured us that it did not compare with the one the river had claimed. His cloth was also made of strips, but the stitching which connected them was a lacy weave, worked in triangles, and made to resemble the vertebrae of a snake. The border was of triangular

1: Herskovits & Herskovits E-5 (1928-1929) 1934
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pieces of red and blue cloth worked with this thread, so that again the white vertebrae showed. Bayo and Angita wore their beads, and each had a garter below the knee of the right leg. Their garters were white in color, but of a whiteness which only new, unwashed cotton has. They were about an inch and a half wide and were so tight that the muscle of the calf bulged prominently. On their upper arms were Kromanti rings of iron which, by contracting, warned the men of impending danger. In addition, Sedefo and Angita wore the bell obia of the Gankwe people, and Bayo his love obia which had come from Lamé.

"When do you go, Sedefo?"

"When the G'aman speaks. When we finish a piece of work, then we do not want to be paid at once. We do not leave at once. It would be as if we had not gone together in pleasure and wanted to be away as soon as possible. With the white man it is one thing. In the bush we do not do it so. Here in the G'aman's village, we do as we do with our own people in the bush," he paused for an instant, and looked about toward the clearing outside the palings. "There is another thing. In the G'aman's village, men cannot leave until the G'aman gives permission. When the G'aman is ready, he will call us. We will speak together. Then we will speak with him again. Then we will ask to go."

Bayo had been looking about the council house with an interest which was not unmixed with awe at the Granman's possessions, and he spoke in whispers.

"Ai, when the G'aman gives permission, then we go."

As he spoke, the cloth over the doorway was gently thrust aside. Bassia Anaisi of the Granman's village entered. He was the man who had fired the saluting gun the day of our arrival and who had at the Granman's call come to serve the visiting chiefs with rum. He now greeted each in turn but did not take down a bench. For a moment he stood there, head lowered out of deference to the character of the place where he was, then he coughed slightly and, turning to us, said, "The G'aman is ready for you. The chiefs are here."

1: Herskovits & Herskovits E-5 (928-1929) 1934
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assemblies such as were reported from the Awka people on the Marowyne were here not called regularly. There was no central body here to make decisions. The autonomy of village and clan seemed almost unquestioned. There were, to be sure, clan alliances, but these bore more directly on the factions which had formed to control the choice of the next headman. At this krutu therefore, which had just gathered, there were Captain Sungi, head of the Kasito or Dahomey clan, and And'u, the able chief of the Dombi people, and the headman of the Popoto people, and the headman of the Anago. But Fandya of Baikutu who headed the Nasi people was not there, nor were the Awana people represented, nor the Alabaisa, nor Kwama, nor Bi'ito, nor Fandaki, to cite some examples. Of the missing chiefs, several of them lived a considerable distance from the seat of the Granman, and indeed had been to his village but few times.

"Ai, men must krutu," Kasanya had told us one day on the river. "If a few men decide, then the others have anger in their hearts. That is not good. When the lanti meets, and all men talk, then those who came with anger cool their hearts. Talk is good."

And another time, Sedefo had found occasion to quote the proverb, "If you have not settled one thing, you cannot go on to the second." The best way was to talk things over until all men saw that what was proposed was good or bad.

4

In the krutu house of Asindopo Lantiwe the Granman began to speak.

"Mati—friends—the white man has come. He sits there. With him is his wife. She is there beside him. The man from the white man's city has come. He is there. He will speak for the white man. The white man has a cook. The cook is outside."

"So it is, G'aman," said Captain Sungi.

"Mati, the white man came. All who come to me must eat. The white man must eat."

"True, true, master of the realm."

1:Herskovits & Herskovits E-5 (1928-1929) 1934
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623 574 643 "Bassia," said the Granman, as he turned to the young man who had come to announce the krutu to us, "go and tell the lanti the white man has come. Tell the lanti the white man must be fed. All who come to this place must eat. Tell the people they must hunt and fish. Let them bring their kill to us here. Let them bring the fish they catch in their traps. Let all know, and may the gods favor their hunting."

"Ai, clever master," came the response, as the bassia left to issue the orders of the Granman.

623 648 "Bak'a," he said, turning to us, "you come from the city of the white man. The G'aman of the white man, in the white man's city, two moons ago, sent a message to us. It is here." He rose from his chair, and reached for several envelopes which were inserted in the chains of the hanging lamp. "What has been written, we cannot read. You know the writing that white men know. Read what the G'aman of the white man has said."

We opened the letter, with its great official seal. In it was a message from the Governor of the Colony, telling Granman Yankuso of our projected trip to the country of the Saramacca people, asking that we be received by him at his village. All this was read in its translation and transmitted to the Granman by our town man. As he spoke, it was the Granman who punctuated his pauses with the ceremonial affirmations.

"So it is."

"So I hear."

"It is as I know."

All listened attentively to the reading of the letter, and when it was concluded, the Granman turned to the members of the krutu.

"Captain Awagi, when I go to the white man's city, word is sent on ahead so that the people of the city know when the G'aman of the Saramacca people comes. So it is in the bush. When a white man comes to the bush, it is well that from the white man's city they tell me who is coming."

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THE COUNCIL OF THE ELDERS

"Kodo!"

"Another letter has come, Bak'a. Will you read that one, too?"

This was a communication written by a lumber factor down the river. One of the villages, it seemed, was in dispute with another over timber rights. The case was laid before the Granman by the factor, who asked that the controversy be settled promptly, since the dispute was keeping the men of both villages from cutting the lumber which had been promised him.

Yankuso now spoke again: "You have heard the message, friends. The man who buys timber asks that I settle this dispute between two of our clans. Their villages are far from here. The clans of the Saramacca people can settle their own disputes."

"Gbolo!"

"So I say, friends. I can look at the cows, but from a distance I cannot tell how many there are. It is not for us here to decide this."

"*Kweti, kweti!*—No, no!"

"It is true, friends, as the Saramacca people say, 'The G'aman's breasts are for all his children.' But it is not my children who have come to me. Bak'a," he said, suddenly turning to us, "later you will write for me to this man who buys lumber. Tell him that for the sake of sweet soup a man eats sour dumplings. So I say."

The Granman looked about him. The heat of midday filled the darkness of the council house, and old Bibifo had dozed off. The gaze of the chief fixed him.

"Mati!" he said, when Bibifo stirred. "Sleep is death!"

Slowly the Granman's eyes circled the room until they came to us.

"The Bak'a has come," he repeated, with his slow intonation, every syllable clearly enunciated. "When the Bak'a came, the rain fell. From Asindopo Lantiwe we shot guns of welcome, from Abenda Konde guns were shot. In the heavens, the gods spoke them welcome. There was thunder."

1: Herskovits & Herskovits E-5 (1928-1929) 1934
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treated with obia. An obia man now addressed the woman who denied the charge that had been lodged against her, restating the accusation and her denial. Then he asked her once more if she were guilty, and when the answer was still "No," the test was applied.

Through the woman's tongue the quill of the feather, which had been treated with magic, was thrust. When the entire length of the feather had passed through the tongue, then it was that the proof was had. If the woman's tongue neither swelled nor showed blood, she was innocent.

But whether it be trial by ordeal or through the taking of testimony, punishment by the krutu went along with punishment by the spirits. Only incest, we learned, was not punishable by the court. That was for kunu alone to avenge.

6

Once more the krutu was in session. Where the men had "gone aside," we did not know, but while we sat in the krutu house, alone with Moana Yankuso, we heard nothing.

The Granman had spoken little. Were our hammocks tied well the night before? Were we satisfied with the arrangements he had made for the storing of our supplies?

What were the elders deciding? We could not but wonder with anxiety. Would this krutu, after the fashion of the bush, where time meant so little, come to no decision? Was the answer to be one that had been previously arranged?

Chief Sungi was the first to speak.

"G'aman, we have gone aside. Your captains and bassias have spoken together. We say, the white man has come. The white man must eat. Let all be told to bring gifts, that you may feed those who have come to you."

"So it is," was the Granman's response. "Friends, great thanks to you. What you have said is good. Let all return to their villages. Let all tell their people that the white man has come. Let all come with gifts, that we may eat."

There was a chorus of affirmations. The Granman arose.

1:Herskovits & Herskovits E-5 (1928-1929) 1934
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"White man," he said, "I have told the young men to hunt, I have told them to fish. My captains, who are here, are going to their villages. You have heard. Their women will come with rice. The young men will bring their kill. So it is in the bush. So G'aman Yankuso holds those who come to him."

As the elders, each with his word of leave taking, left the house to us, we thought of the Granman's last words and of the verdict of the krutu. We had sat long enough in this assembly to realize the circumlocution which went with all statement, and we tried to decipher the cryptic words of the chiefs. Was it a verdict at all? Or was it merely a way of refusing to come to any decision when the white man sat in the krutu which was deciding the fate of his visit? That the decision would be reflected in the attitude of the people of the village seemed reasonable to suppose. And so, drawing aside the curtain which hung over the door, we went out into the open square before our house to see what the krutu had decided.

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"It hurts, doesn't it?"

"*Ma kye!* It is beautiful. The men like it too much," said the girls in a chorus, laughing at the suggestion that the pain of the cuts would deter them from having them made.

Sometimes, of course, the older girl admitted, the wounds did become ugly. There was the girl from Godo, whose suitor had kept bringing her more gifts because she was growing handsomer and handsomer. She was all but ready for marrying, when one of her thighs became infected after the cuts. The wounds were so ugly that she could not even wear the tunics of the grown girl. The family was sacrificing to all the spirits of the earth, begging them to heal the wounds.

7

These days there were many visitors in the Granman's village. There was the girl the Granman had summoned to dance for his guests. She had, perhaps, that very summer got her cloths, and her reputation as the best dancer on the river had won for her a suitor who gave her many armlets and anklets. Her voice was fresh and flutelike in quality, and so fine that when she sang she placed a folded cloth over her mouth, or danced with her head low. This was the way of modesty before people, and humility before the gods.

The women said, "Her spirits dance well," when they watched her.

There was the large girl from a village down river who came almost daily. She had the body of a woman, yet she went about unclothed, and sometimes she appeared only with a string about her waist.

"She is ready for *pangi*—cloths—ai," the women said, "but her people do not want to give them to her yet."

They would not explain, however, why the attire of a grown woman was denied her. We could only conjecture about it. Perhaps she had no suitor. The man to whom she had been promised might have died. There might be other reasons.

1: Herskovits & Herskovits E-5 (1928-1929) 1934
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"The openings in the wall there," she explained, when we asked her about the two squares cut into the wall behind the altar, "are for all things that fly. In this place they must come and go as they like. Bats come here, and insects of all kinds, and when they want to go back to the bush, they must be able to go as they like. That is the wish of the gods. So they told us long ago."

6

We were led from house to house. The gods had spoken. We were friends, and as friends who came not to harm, we were given the hospitality of friendship. There were other shrines, but we did not have to ask about them. They were pointed out to us with the other sights of the village.

The closed low hut near the Apuku shrine we had entered was to the river god Toné. It was a very small enclosure, and before it was a plant which covered the low entrance. It belonged, we were told, to an albino woman who was possessed by Toné. But she was not in the village now. Farther down the path was a larger house, another shrine. This had a piece of iron over the door and, when we asked about it, the girls who were following us ran, and the men merely said that it was the place of the Kromanti obia and passed on.

As we continued on our way, each woman was anxious not to have us slight the house her man had built her or fail to admire the carvings that were inserted into the weave of the palm walls. The huts were swept clean—the cleanliness of the entire village was even more striking than that of others we had visited—and but for a few stools, which were brought out for the strangers while they spoke with the old people who lived in the quarter, they were entirely bare. In every house, however, there was sure to be a shelf, large or small, or several shelves, on which stood prized food trays with carvings which covered both inner and outer surfaces. Combs and food stirrers were taken down and shown us, and the calabash dishes made by the women

1: Herskovits & Herskovits E-5 (1928-1929) 1934
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morning, they tell us when we call on them. That is the black man's way.

"You white people have money, you have fine houses, you wear clothes, you can count. They tell me that you say in your books all people must be friends. But you have wars. If white people kill white people, then *mati*—friend—how will it be with black people living among the whites?"

Granman Yankuso rose, when he said this, and took from the chains of the suspended lamp a folded envelope. He handed it to us, and from it we took out a letter on the stationery of the League of Nations, signed by its Secretary, Sir Eric Drummond. As we were reading this, he left the council house and soon returned with a larger envelope, which he had kept uncreased, and from it brought out a photograph of the Council of the League of Nations in session. They were his proud possessions. While the World War lasted there was no work for the Bush Negroes on the river. They could not earn the money they needed to buy cloths for marrying and powder and rum for ceremonial usage. The Bush Negroes called it a "great money famine," in the way of their Anansi stories which so often began with "This was a time of great famine." Through a missionary on the upper river, the Granman learned of the war, and through him later of the League, which the missionary had undoubtedly brought up as the white man's defense against the challenge of the black tribal head, who asked, "How will it be with black people living among the whites?"

It was then that the Granman through this same missionary addressed himself to the white rulers far away, telling of the fear of the blacks, and counseling them the wisdom of peace!

4

In the council house Granman Moana Yankuso was host to the Gankwe men. They were there to take their leave of him before starting down river. Asikanu, the handsome brother of the Gankwe clan head, who was sent away from his village while the elders were deciding upon his adultery

1:Herskovits & Herskovits E-5 (1928-1929) 1934
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643 684 574 [576] fine, sat between Sedefo, whose bench was moved forward a little, and Angita. The younger men sat with bodies half-turned toward the wall, out of respect for the Granman, the older ones, with their faces averted from him.

The Granman was speaking, telling a story.

643 684 538 "Ai, mati . . . " he said, in his precise, formal way, laying stress on each syllable, "in our bush, the gods be praised, men are men. There was a man near here, who saw a woman he liked, and he took her. He had a loving eye, he was young. Ai, mati, what is a beating to a man when he is young? But the proverb says, 'All that is in the darkness will come to light.' Dealings with women always come to light too soon. That man got a beating, mati! He came out into the clearing, his head held high, like any man whom young girls follow with their eyes. But waiting for him was the husband of the woman, and the men of his family, and. . . . "

"Well, so it is, G'ama'," said Sedefo, with the careful modulation which showed that he, too, was schooled in the way of the important councils.

"Ya-hai, G'ama'," said Asikanu, more briefly.

Granman Yankuso now went on with his story, bringing to his recital all the detail of the punishment of the adulterer, without quickening the telling of his story even when he spóke the words which described the sound of the blows.

"Yes, master of the realm," said Sedefo, his head still averted, but leaning his body forward a little as he spoke, so that he somewhat shielded Asikanu from the direct gaze of the Granman, yet managing this clever gesture so that it had the air of rapt interest.

"Kere-kere, G'ama'," Asikanu breathed, almost inaudibly.

As the Granman recounted his tale, Asikanu's spine twitched as though every blow mentioned was that instant being leveled at him, as though he himself were lying head down in the dust of the clearing, while blows rained down upon him, and the Kromanti iron bands cut gashes into his proud face and arms and body.

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But Sedefo, splendid actor that he was, betrayed in no way that he was aware of his friend's discomfiture, except that his interpolations became more and more spirited, balancing in the intensity of his voice the formality of the Granman's speech.

"True, true!" he said, with excitement.

"By Ando, G'ama'!"

When the tale was finished, the Granman became reminiscent. In his youth he had been like the rest. What did it mean to be a man and not to assert one's manhood when a handsome woman was to be had? He was on the Marowyne then. Did they want to beat him? He had said, "Very well." As many as wished could come at him—but one at a time.

As he spoke now, he clenched his fist and struck the table with it so that the table shook and the guns which lay underneath it rattled.

He was no longer young, but his answer to people who threatened would still be the same, he continued.

"Tell them that everywhere on the river, mati," he finished with a smile, and he cleared his throat as a signal for the bassia to come and pour out drinks for his visitors, before they left his village.

And how was their clan head who had been ailing? he asked, with friendly solicitude.

5

Granman Yankuso was telling about his great ancestors. He looked particularly well that night. His smock-like coat was a deep blue, and over it was a print of orange and black worn toga fashion.

There was Bagida, one of the first to escape to the bush, and Dosi who made the Kasito clan, and Ajako who was a Matchau Negro, a man of the Granman's own clan, and it was he who had fought against the whites and had freed his people. There were Mother Bedu, and Mother Fakia, and the great Abini family which bore Alabi, whom the peccary had helped to freedom, so that Alabi's people, the Awana Negroes, to this day did not eat pingo.

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533 surprised us that night at S'ei, and when he paused for a
106 moment the women took up the chorus. From one song to
107 another he went, and the hand clapping grew louder, and the chorus joined in more frequently, often breaking into his recitative, so that there was harmonizing of theme and chorus.

Once or twice the Granman called for a song we had already recorded, in order to give Mapasi a rest.

"Play us something from the lower river, white man. Let them hear their own songs, too, sung by others."

When the excitement of hearing the machine reproduce the song they had just sung had grown less intense, the singers repeated the song the phonograph was reproducing for them, for to listen to music without singing was difficult for them, just as when they sang, they could not but move their feet, though there was scarcely more than room for them to stand one close to the other. But a Bush Negro needs little room for his dancing, so that as the phonograph played their songs for them, they clapped their hands and danced in place. For a short interval, at least, the existence of the whites was forgotten in their pleasure of singing with the machine.

Until late into the night we played our records for them, and they sang for us. Whatever the consequences to the frail records of soft wax, we decided to play as long as they would listen, because of something in the manner of the Granman, something of wistfulness, let us say, and something, perhaps, which went deeper yet, as he sat there—a black Hamlet following a mute soliloquy while he looked on with his clever, perplexed eyes.

"Ai, so it is," he said at last, "and now let us go and get sleep." He rose and the others followed him out of the council house.

II

123 Early the next morning, while the tent on our boat was
182 being finished, the Granman came into the council house
189 with a calabash and a buzzard's feather in his hand. He
574 came up to each of us in turn, and struck with the medicine-
609 dipped feather the tops of our heads, brushed the eyes,

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[illegible] Bush Negroes [illegible]
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touched the palms of our hands, and struck against the calves three times.

"This is obia," he said simply, and when he was finished, he went out.

Our cook knew this obia. It was Opete obia, medicine bearing the name of the sacred buzzard. It was given us that we might have a good journey down the river.

"Did you see how he was careful to touch the eyes?" our cook pointed out to us. "The Opete gets the eyes when it comes to a person, just like Kromanti goes into the head, and Vodu into the belly."

When we went out for a moment, and walked toward our storeroom, we saw the Granman splash water out of a calabash onto the floor and front wall of the house which held our supplies. Was it that our belongings might be safe on our journey down? It was no time for questions, and we asked none.

Women and children again came crowding about the white woman. Though they had been warned not to talk, there was still something of the warm feeling of earlier times which a command did not entirely destroy. Then, too, the order was that the sendoff was to lack no formality. As we stood there, a dog came running down the path. He was on his way to the river. In his mouth was a large ball of something which had been thoroughly charred. It was an offering to the river spirits, perhaps. It might have been less pleasant magic. He had been sent by men who were busy in the ancestral shrine.

When the white woman called attention to the dog, and asked what he held, the women recoiled with amazement that she should have seen the dog at all. Part of the magic might have been, as it was in some formulas we recorded, that he was to pass by invisible to the strangers. But this is conjecture. . . .

The moment before we went down the path to the river, Amasina came up alone, and gave us her hand. She was gracious, and completely at her ease. Whatever was said, she had faith in her god Towenu, who had vouched for our friendship.

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Chapter XV

THE ARTIST OF MA'LOBBI

1

WE WERE recalled to the council house for a final informal krutu with Granman Yankuso and some of his elders before the more formal leave-taking on the river bank. Our boats were being loaded and soon we should be on our way down river. With the elders were the diviners, and our friend, the bassia.

The Granman opened the krutu, greeting and addressing the men who were present, until he turned to us.

"White man, you and your woman came to my village. I held you both well. Now when you are ready to go I give you my grandson for paddler, and the chief of my village for captain of your boat. That is how we do with those who come in friendship."

Through our town man, as was the way of the krutu, we spoke our acknowledgments to him, and our regrets that our visit was ending. Through our man, the last gifts to the tribal head were tendered, and through one of the elders, the ritual expression of thanks was returned us for what we had put before the Granman.

We had two favors to ask of him. For many days we had lived in this house, and had admired the fine carvings which the council house held. In our own country, when we thought of the days on the upper Saramacca River, a piece of carving from this house would give us much pleasure. But of the elaborate carvings we did not wish to

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deprive him. Might we buy, however, one of the simple benches from the shelf above the door, which the chiefs and we ourselves had used many times?

The one we took down had interested us for its possible ritual significance. On its top a single design was repeated four times. It was a representation of an axe-head, and the clan of Yankuso was the Matchau, the Axe Clan.

The Granman looked at the diviner. "*Fa fo do?*—What to do?" was his query.

The man he addressed murmured, "*T'obi*—Trouble."

But it was, after all, only a small and slightly ornamented bench.

"Take it!" the Granman said. "What else is it you ask?"

There was the apinti drum. In the house where objects of all peoples of the earth were brought for men and women to look at, there were none of the fine carvings the Bush Negroes make. When we returned, we would place beside the African and Indian objects which were there those of the Saramacca people. As yet, we had not been able to buy an apinti drum. This one was more beautiful than any we had seen. Could he not sell it to us, so that everyone might know that the finest of drums had come from the council house of Moana Yankuso, Granman of the Saramacca people?

This time he did not hesitate. He smiled, and shook his head.

"No, no, white man," he said, "this drum is not for me to sell. This one I cannot part with, not for all your goods. Down river, when you visit my villages, you can get an apinti which will be beautiful. When you come to the village of Akunkun, and you see Kasanya, ask him to find you an apinti. I will tell Captain Mataibo to leave a message at other villages that you want an apinti. This one no gold can buy."

This was not our first attempt to buy an apinti drum. Nor was it to be the last refusal.

Waiting, we sat in the council house while our supplies were being carried to the canoes and placed in them, until

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123 623 594 209 [554] Mataibo, the head of Yankuso's village, who was entrusted with the safe passage of our boats, came to announce that the men had done loading. Before the morning was yet well advanced we left the house, and with the Granman under his umbrella, which was the highest of insignia, passed to the river bank.

Our friends were there—the bassia, and Dida, and Amasina, and the Granman's wives and his little grandson, who shouted to us, "*Waka bon, yo'o!*—Travel well, you hear!" in the best manner of his elders. Again three guns sounded, and once more we were on the river, looking up at the people of these villages of the Pikien Rio who were waving to us from the shore.

502 Going down the river was restful. The enjoyment of the easy motion of the boats was felt in the manner of the paddlers themselves. Now there was no hard poling against the heavy current. As canoes were urged on the two paddlers wielded their long blades in unison, and the dugouts swung downstream in the center of the river, where the current was heaviest. When the murmurs of the rapids ahead were heard, it was but a moment until they grew into a roar, and then, in another, we were through, the man at the front standing up for an instant so that, with a twist of his paddle, he might turn the head of the boat from any threatening rock, while the stern man did not stroke at all, but merely held the craft on the course which was marked where the water tossed itself into foam-capped waves. Sometimes, as we came to rapids where the force of the water was especially strong, or there was a sharp double curve to be negotiated, the two boats would pause for a moment while Mataibo called out to the younger men the course to follow. Then into the falls, and through them, and our bow paddler would carefully rearrange his loin cloth and sit down once more to take up his steady stroking.

123 608 831 Opposite one village Sungi came in his boat to meet us, to give and receive a final gift, and say his goodbye. But it was not to the landing place of Dahomey that he took us for this interchange, but to the village of his wife, he told

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BAYO, THE PLAYBOY

"Bayo has asked me to find a strong *arumani* for you," she said, naming the obia she held with the word for such magically endowed properties used by the Ashanti today, on the West Coast of Africa. In rapid succession she gave us the African words of the Kromanti designation for the white clay, for the ancestral pot, and for several other ceremonial objects we discussed with her.

"Did you make these for us?"

"Ah, no. Women do not make obias. My brother made them for you."

The next morning when we were leaving Djamungo she came to the landing place with us. In our hands were the images we had bought. The young paddlers looked on them with fear. On no account would they even come too close to us who carried them. It was not the image, nor the external properties of a sacred object which disclosed its power, but rather the magic that had been called to reside in it, and the strength of the gods of him who had been instrumental in bringing the magic to the figure of wood, the brass bell, the cowrie shells, the ant-eater's bristles, or whatever else was used.

"Tell them in your village," Bayo's mother's sister called after us, "that here at Djamungo the Kromanti spirit does not come to men only. When women get Kromanti, they, too, can fight."

2

We had not been back at our base camp for more than a day when Bayo came up the path calling the greeting of a comrade. Had we fared well with the Granman?

He had, he told with pride, seen all those things a man who went on so long a journey should see, and he had been to Lamé again, where there were strong obias and where the women knew how to love. Now he would remain with us until we left the bush, and he might even decide to go with us to the city, and from there to the French shore, where there was money to be got. What with the money he had earned for timber, and the money we had given

2:Kahn D-5 (1922-1930) 1931
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437 The reply is short and spirited.
"Gimme."
Which does not have to be translated.

574 We sleep that night in the Bush Negro village. A dilapi-
609 dated hut is assigned us, the hut of a dead man. There are
136 tarantulas on the cross-poles; we are not particular. The pad-
dlers sleep elsewhere, being taken into friendly huts about the village. Except for the ghosts of the departed Bush Negroes, our hut is quite empty. The hammock is slung and the mosquito netting put in place. Mosquitoes and insect pests are not as bad in the jungle as commonly reported. They seldom caused us any discomfort. It is true that one of the boys contracted malaria during an expedition, but the parasites may have been dormant in his blood for some time previously. Our precaution against malaria was ten grains of quinine sulphate each night before retiring under the mosquito netting.

512 Far into the evening the Negroes will sit around the camp-
[521] fire and tell stories, their loud, musical Negro laughter carrying a long distance on the night air. Walking by each hut we see a tiny light flickering inside. Occasionally an infant cries. We sit before our doorway, amusing a group of chil-

Chapter Four

THE DANCE

SUNDOWN on the Surinam. Women with breasts like dried tobacco leaves stew hunks of red baboon over the Djuka fires. The old dance gods will stir tonight. Mist is drifting up from the river and blowing between the trees. Colours fade out as darkness falls. The atmosphere of the jungle closes in on us with the night.

As night falls a Bush Negro corial appears on the river. It is followed by four others, all loaded with people from another village three miles downstream. The strangers have come to dance for the bahkra. We have promised them candy and high wine. The women tie bands of nuts about their limbs; the dried nuts rattle.

They bring the drums, the soul of the jungle. The big tom-tom, elaborately carved on the outside, is the *apenti*, or signal drum. The smaller *sanda* and the baby *baboula* (an African

[p. 52 is blank]

/10 cont./

574 The politeness shown toward a guest springs from the idea that unknowingly one of them might easily take the very piece that the important person wished to have, and although no comment would be made on this, it could nonetheless happen that this would trouble the guest for whom they cherish special respect, 818 or that he would thereby consider himself insulted. It is particularly to old age that they pay great respect.

Chapter VI

Household and Agricultural Implements

412 The Bush Negroes mainly use adzes in order to hew their [322] corjalen or canoes out of trees partially burned out beforehand; [124] furthermore, they use planes and chisels in order to work their [531] (usually cedarwood) (1) stools and parels or paddles (2). They are

1. Cedrela odorata L.

2. Hand oar.

especially fond of having these carved with many figures. For them the machete is an indispensable tool that they always carry around and use as a chopping knife, sword, and knife, indeed, even to cut splinters or thorns out of the foot with the tip. They use field axes or hatchets to cut down the bush in order to lay out their small cultivation grounds and to work the wood that they float by rafts and sell.

562 412 The women possess, aside from a machete or knife, also [324] mattocks with which they keep their lands and the place near the [413] dwelling neat; they make brooms from the pina palm racemes or from rice ears bound in sheaves. They like to have scissors, needles, and pins, while for knitting they use a pointed and bent nail.

413 They spin their sewing thread from cotton with a certain [283] tool which they call kéké; they also have a round, wooden tool [286] called sepoe, with which they very nicely and sturdily /11/ make

765 /263 cont./ He will go to the spot, following
782 at a good distance M..., bearer of the remedy, with which he will sprinkle the surface of the clearing, and of offering objects. When the offering has been made, they will wait some time to see whether Masauman is better and if she is, they will deem the god appeased.

The Yali Festival

796
[805] The Refugee Blacks, who do not count the days that elapse, contenting themselves with lunations in order to follow the course of the year, make inquiries from Europeans and Creoles to set the time for the Yali festival which marks the new year. Everyone accumulates provisions, especially tortoise meat, varied drinks, and many firecrackers.

On the evening of December 31 each one dances in his own village.

The festival lasts all night, tafia gushes forth, firecrackers go off everywhere.

[787] At the end of the night several gods "rise" in the heads of their bearers, at least of those who are not completely drunk.

[535] During the day dances resume intermittently in the order awasa, sɔŋgɛ, susa. It is customary for the people of one lineage to go to dance in the village of another, then they [574] invite them back. People make many individual visits. Some have set up in front of their hut a sort of small buffet on which they have arranged about ten glasses, five to six liters of tafia, four or five bottles of beer, lemonade, and syrup.

Observation in Boniville, January 1, 1958:

The grand man, who scarcely leaves his habitation downstream from Boniville any more, did not /264/ put himself out. He delegated his functions to Lẽbiman and Fintiman, men about 50 years old, belonging to the fraction of the Kotika and Dju lineages residing in Boniville.